ATARI XE

VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE

Game Manual

ARCHON™

by Electronic Arts

THE LIGHT AND THE DARK

You are about to engage in the ultimate battle of the universe — the eternal struggle between Light and Darkness. Within your power rests the future of the world as we know it. Which side will you be on? Who will be your opponent? Which side will make the first move?

It's an even contest to begin with. The Light Side and the Dark Side start out with the same number of warriors from myths and legends, balanced in strength, though not identical. Their aim, however, is identical: the conquest of the five "power points" or the elimination of the opposite side.

System Requirements

- Atari XE game system console or XE or XL™ computer
- Color TV or color monitor
- One or two joysticks
- XE keyboard (optional)

Getting Started

1. With your XE game system turned off, insert the Archon cartridge into the slot on the top of your console as explained in your Owner's Manual.

2. Plug a joystick into either port for a one-player game. Plug one joystick into controller port 1 and another into controller port 2 for a two-player game. Controller port 1 controls the Light Side, and controller port 2 controls the Dark Side.

3. Turn on your TV or monitor, and then turn on your console. The Archon title screen appears.

4. To begin the game, press [Start]; then press either [Option] or [Select]. The opening board screen appears. After several seconds, if you don't begin play, the computer will run through the game demonstration.

5. Press [Option] or [Select] in the middle of the demonstration or a game to return to the opening board screen and the pregame options. Press [Start] to restart the game with the same options.

6. Press [Option] repeatedly to select a one-player or two-player game and, if it's a one-player game, to select Light or Dark for the computer.

7. Press [Select] repeatedly to choose which side goes first, Light or Dark.

8. Press [Start] to start the game.

9. Press [Reset] to return to the title screen.

10. If you have a keyboard, press **[Esc]** to pause the game; press it again to resume play. Pausing works only when your opponent is the computer and only in the combat zone.

Playing the Game

Archon is played on two screens: the strategy screen and the combat screen. On the strategy screen, you and your opponent take turns maneuvering your regiments of different mythical and legendary creatures into squares on the board. Whenever you place a creature on a square already occupied by one of your opponent's creatures, you'll have to fight for it.

From here the struggle shifts temporarily to the combat screen, an enlargement of the dually occupied square. This is a one-on-one combat zone, where opponents fight for their lives. Whichever creature wins the battle wins control of the square.

The game is over when either side controls the five flashing red "power points" on the board or

destroys all the opponent's forces. To start a new game, press **[Start]**. To change the options, press **[Select]** or **[Option]**.

Strategy Screen

On the strategy screen, you take your turn when the square frame is on your side of the screen. Move the joystick handle to position the frame on the creature you want to move; then press the joystick fire button to confirm your choice. Once you press the button, you must move that creature somewhere. If the creature has no place to go, the computer will let you know. Move the joystick handle to direct the creature to its destination square; then press the fire button again.

Creatures can move in three ways: on the ground, in the air, or via teleporting. Ground movers cannot move through occupied squares. Fliers are restricted only in their destination. Only the Wizard and the Sorceress can teleport. The computer will tell you how you can move when you select a creature.

You can move a creature only as far as its range allows in any

direction or combination of directions. The creature can stop on any square not already occupied by one of its allies. If you change your mind while maneuvering a ground mover, the creature must backtrack the way it came.

Creatures on the Light Side are harder to defeat on light squares than on dark ones; and Dark Side creatures are harder to defeat on dark squares than on light ones. Watch the shades of the squares. Some squares' shading changes throughout the game.

Combat Screen

In the combat zone, you maneuver your creature by moving the joystick handle up, down, left, right, or diagonally. You then press the joystick fire button to attack—swing a sword, fire an arrow, or cast a fireball—in the direction the joystick handle is pointed. (Your creature cannot move while you press the joystick fire button.)

Timing is important here. Don't just fire away. Each creature needs time to ready its weapon between attacks. The computer will sound a bell—a high note for the Light Side, a lower one for the Dark Side—to let you know that you can launch an attack.

Check the shades of the barriers in the arena. The more solid a barrier looks, the more solid it is. Barriers can disappear for a few seconds, at which time you can walk over them and shoot past them.

The "lifelines" at either end of the arena indicate the current lifespan of the two battling creatures. If a creature's lifeline disappears, that creature is destroyed.

The Opposing Forces

In Archon, there are two regiments of 18, with eight different types of creatures in each regiment. None of yours is identical to any of the creatures on the other side. Each creature has its own characteristics—its own rules for maneuvering and its own fighting style. To win this struggle, get to know each creature well, so that you can plan your strategy wisely.
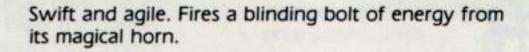
The Light Side

Wizard
Leader of the Light Side. Rarely ventures from the safety of his home power point. Can cast magic spells.

Unicorn
Swift and agile. Fires a blinding bolt of energy from its magical horn.

Archer
Endowed with magical quivers that can never be emptied.

Golem
Rips boulders from the earth and hurls them with devastating force.

Valkyrie
Can stride the air as if it were solid ground. Her spear returns to her hand of its own accord.

Djinni
Cousin to the wind. Can raise a small tornado.

Phoenix
Can explode into a mass of fire in battle, scorching anyone on the perimeter of the blaze. During transformation, Phoenix cannot be harmed.

Knight
Swings a sword. Must be near opponent to inflict damage. Cannot withstand more than one blow from many of his enemies. Speed of attack is important.

The Dark Side

Sorceress

Equal to the Wizard in power. Her lightning bolts are swifter and surer than his fireballs. Safest on the power point. Can cast magic spells.

Basilisk

A crested reptile, with quick movements and a deadly glance.

Manticore

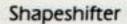Can fling spike-like quills over its head with surprising accuracy.

Troll

Dull and clumsy, but strong and hard to destroy. Seizes bolders, tree trunks—whatever comes to hand—and hurls them at enemies.

Shapeshifter

No shape or form of its own. In battle, it becomes the mirror image of its opponent. No fixed lifespan. All wounds that are not fatal will heal when it assumes a new form.

Dragon

Without peer in combat. Destroys with flaming breath. Very mobile and difficult to slay. Second in value only to the Sorceress.

Banshee

Undead spirit that feeds off the souls of her opponents. Attacks with her wail, destroying anyone within range of her sound. Enemies should stay clear of the circle.

Goblin

On dark ground, its club is more than a match for the knight's sword. Must be near opponent to inflict damage.

Magic Spells

Only the Wizard and the Sorceress can cast magic spells, and they cannot cast the same spell twice in one game. Cast spells from the strategy screen when it's your turn to move. Position the frame on the Wizard or Sorceress; then press the joystick button. Press the button again to summon your choice of spells. Then move the joystick handle up or down to survey the spells still available. Follow the directions on the screen to cast your spell. You cannot cast a spell against power points or creatures sitting on them. Each time the Wizard or Sorceress casts a spell, the creature becomes weaker and less able to defend itself against attack.

Teleport

The Teleport spell moves any of your creatures any distance from one square to another. You cannot move an opponent's creature or an imprisoned creature, move onto a square occupied by one of your own creatures, or move onto or off a power point.

Heal

The Heal spell instantly heals any creature's wounds. You cannot heal a creature resting on a power point.

Shift Time

Shift Time reverses the flow of time (reversing how squares'

shading changes) or causes the shading cycle to shift abruptly to the opposite extreme (from black to white or white to black).

Exchange

Exchange causes any two creatures to trade places. Neither creature can be imprisoned or on a power point.
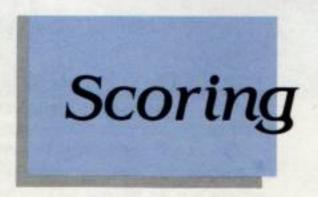
Summon Elemental

Summon Elemental calls into battle one of the four elements—earth, air, fire, or water. The elemental vanishes after the battle is over.

Revive

The Revive spell restores a creature previously lost in action. One of the squares next to your Wizard or Sorceress must be vacant, and you must place the revived creature onto one of these squares.

Imprison

The Imprison spell prevents a creature from leaving the square temporarily, although it can continue to fight its attackers in the combat zone. Prisoners cannot cast spells. Creatures on power points cannot be imprisoned. Dark Side creatures remain imprisoned until squares whose shades change are black; Light Side creatures remain imprisoned until the squares become white.

Scoring

Whoever controls the five flashing red power points or destroys all the opponent's forces wins the game.

Strategy Tips

Stay on your color! The effect of a square's shading on your creatures' lives is significant.

Avoid traffic jams. Make openings in your front line for ground movers to pass through. The greater your force's mobility, the greater its flexibility and strength.

Protect your Wizard or Sorceress. Doom is nigh should you lose them early in the game.

Don't be predictable. Dodge and weave during combat.

Use diagonal shots while fighting. They're very effective.

Revive only strong creatures.

Imprison a threatening intruder to blunt an attack or to immobilize a strong creature on a square whose shade changes; then attack when the creature is most vulnerable.

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